

Coronavirus: Weekly update

From Camden Council

The situation with coronavirus is changing daily and the Council is committed to keeping residents updated regularly with essential information.

You'll find weekly updates here in the Camden New Journal, including changes to council services and information about the support available in the community through the Council and its partners.

For the latest updates, visit the dedicated webpage camden.gov.uk/coronavirus and the rolling news feed camden.gov.uk/coronavirusnews. You can also check Twitter [@CamdenCouncil](https://twitter.com/CamdenCouncil) or speak to someone at the Council directly on **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.



SIGN UP to the Council's coronavirus e-newsletter for service updates, news and support, at camden.gov.uk/coronavirus-updates

Stay home and stay safe this weekend

With the weekend approaching and warmer weather forecast, remember to keep following the guidance and stay home to save lives.

If you do need to go out for essential items or your once a day exercise, please remember to always maintain a 2-metre distance from others.

If you are using our parks or open spaces, please don't use them to sit, sunbathe, picnic or play sports, as this stops others safely using the space.

Camden Council has frontline teams out across the borough to make sure parks are being used responsibly and safe social distancing is being followed.

- ✓ Only exercise once per day
- ✓ Keep 2 metres away from others (unless they live with you)
- ✓ Stay local and avoid areas when busy
- ✓ Keep moving and spread out
- ✓ Make use of your garden if you have one

Don't use parks and open spaces for:

- ✗ Sunbathing
- ✗ Picnics and barbecues
- ✗ Sports
- ✗ Gatherings and meeting friends



I want to start by saying Ramadan Mubarak to everyone marking the start of this holy month. Many of our Muslim neighbours will continue working during Ramadan, fasting whilst doing essential work in our communities. As Ramadan is a period for reflection and for community, I want to say thank you to all the key workers, carers, and volunteers, working round the clock to look after us and keep our borough running.

Next Tuesday (28 April) also marks International Workers' Memorial Day, and as we work together through this current crisis it is more important than ever to pause for a moment and remember those who have lost their lives at work, or from work-related injuries and diseases. As we stay home to prevent spread of the virus, essential workers are risking their lives to protect us and to provide vital services. Tragically lives have been lost and this is devastating for loved ones and communities.

As our communities continue to come together during this difficult time, I am reminded of the strength of Camden's spirit and the people who make our borough the generous and giving place it is. Thank you to everyone who is playing their part to help us all stay safe.

I also feel really lucky to work alongside all of the dedicated councillors who represent Camden's wards. Thank you for your tireless work and commitment to our residents. If anyone needs to get in touch with us, please contact Member Support on **020 7974 2792** or membersupport@camden.gov.uk

Councillor Georgia Gould, Leader of Camden Council



Tonight marks the beginning of Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar.

Ramadan is a time for reflection, devotion and worship. However, this year it will also be a very different kind of celebration as everyone continues to observe public health rules around social distancing and staying at home as much as possible. Sadly, this means you cannot visit mosques to pray, or visit family and friends you don't live with. This year, the safest place to pray is at home.

There are still ways to come together virtually though, like streaming lectures or taraweeh, and organising virtual iftars with loved ones through video-calling apps.

Please remember it is absolutely critical everyone continues to observe the rules. This will help protect yourselves, Camden's communities, and the NHS.

Share how you're observing Ramadan virtually this year and tag the Council on Twitter [@CamdenCouncil](https://twitter.com/CamdenCouncil) [#WeMakeCamden](https://twitter.com/WeMakeCamden) [#RamadanAtHome](https://twitter.com/RamadanAtHome)

Service updates



Call for Camden businesses to donate spare laptops

Camden Council is encouraging businesses to donate spare laptops and iPads for vulnerable students without access to a device at home, to help them access vital online learning while schools are closed.

The Council is also working with schools, community groups and local businesses to find ways to ensure pupils have a Wi-Fi connection in their homes.

If a business has laptops or iPads they can donate to a school in Camden that meet some simple criteria, the Council will collect the laptops and work with schools to distribute them to children who most need them.

Companies can also make financial donations and sponsor schools to help purchase or repurpose laptops for students.

To find out more, including how to donate, go to camden.gov.uk/digital-divide

Helping you with employment worries



At this difficult time many residents are struggling in an unstable job market, which can cause additional stress. Whether you're experiencing insecure work, need financial support, or are out of work and don't know where to start, Good Work Camden – a new service from Camden Council – can help.

Good Work Camden's Job Hub is available to any Camden resident, providing one-to-one support on all employment-related matters. This includes:

- Employment advice
- Links to job vacancies
- Support with CVs, job applications and interviews
- Links to training services
- Access to benefits advice
- Direct links to other Camden Council services.

Job Hub Advisors work with services across the borough to ensure residents get the support they need right now.

To register for the Job Hub, visit camden.gov.uk/employment-support or email jobhub@camden.gov.uk

Mental health support

Many of you may be struggling with your mental health during this challenging time and it's important to seek support when you need it. You can:

- Phone your GP and they can refer you to further support
- Contact Camden iCope to access short term support if you are struggling to cope with the current situation at icope.nhs.uk

If you or someone you care for is at risk of taking their own life or harming themselves, you can get 24-hour support via the Camden & Islington NHS Foundation Trust crisis line on **020 3317 6333**.

You may be asked to attend the Mental Health Crisis Assessment Centre at St Pancras Hospital – an alternative to A&E. If it's an emergency and cannot wait, call **999**.

Visit candi.nhs.uk and camden.gov.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing to find information on how to reach out for support.

Using lifts safely during COVID-19



Community support

Many of the organisations in Camden's voluntary sector are providing emergency food. If you or anyone you know needs support, here are some ways you can access it:

- 1 Link up with local organisations who can help you access food and other support at coronavirus-help.camden.gov.uk
- 2 Call Camden Council, who will be able to offer further advice, on **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.
- 3 The food bank at Maiden Lane Community Centre is still operating. Refer yourself or someone you know online at maidenlanecommunitycentre.org or call Amanda on **07415 354784**. They're also accepting donations at the Community Centre on Tuesdays and Fridays from 12 to 2pm, or you can donate food and essentials at Maiden Lane's food bank collection point in Sainsbury's in Camden Town. Items needed include UHT milk, sugar, pasta, rice, tinned food, loo roll and nappies.
- 4 The Living Centre will host Camden Mobile Food Bank for the next three months. To refer yourself or someone you know, complete the online form at urbancommunityprojects.org.uk/referral-form

5 Feast With Us provides fresh cooked meals for Hampstead and Camden Town residents

Feast With Us collects surplus fresh produce – that would otherwise be thrown away – from north London retailers to cook and deliver nutritious meals to vulnerable adults on a weekly basis.

They are currently operating a hot meal delivery service in Hampstead on Tuesday evenings and in Camden Town on Thursday evenings – with plans to expand in Hampstead to deliver on more days.

To get in touch and request a hot meal, or if you would like to volunteer to help prepare meals, email volunteer@feastwithus.org.uk For more information, visit feastwithus.org.uk



6 Cooperation Kentish Town delivers food parcels to residents

Local community-led food co-op Cooperation Kentish Town – part of the Cooperation Town network – is coordinating mass food distributions to local residents on low or no income. Based at the Ingestre Community Centre, they pack and deliver parcels to hundreds of households in and around NW5, providing families with fresh vegetables and tinned food, bread, pasta and healthy snacks.

They accept referrals from groups, agencies and neighbours, and aim to deliver as many parcels as possible every Wednesday afternoon.

To get in touch, email CooperationKentishTown@gmail.com or through mutual-aid.uk

“The parcel today really lifted my spirits. Apart from bread, rice, and root vegetables, I received crisps, a yoghurt and a jar of honey!!! I am really looking forward to some bread and honey.”
Gigi

Find more ways to access food and other support at camden.gov.uk/coronavirus

Volunteer support for local organisations

Camden Council's volunteer brokerage service can help voluntary and community organisations access and verify volunteers. If your organisation needs volunteers for a role, email volunteers@camden.gov.uk and include:

- What the role is (brief summary)
- How many volunteers you need
- If a DBS is required
- Contact details including phone number.

If you need support with existing volunteers that either need their current DBS to be verified or require a new DBS, email schoolsdb@camden.gov.uk using the heading 'COVID Volunteer Enquiry'.

Find more information at camden.gov.uk/support-for-community-organisations



Further information

During this time everyone should be social distancing. If you or someone in your household develops symptoms you will need to self-isolate. This means not leaving your house at all.

Day	Person A	Person B	Person C	Person D
01	Develops symptoms triggering			
02	7-day isolation for herself and 14 days for her household			
03		Develops symptoms and starts 7-day count		
04				
05				
06				
07				
08	Isolation ends if symptoms have stopped			
09				
10		Isolation ends if symptoms have stopped		
11				
12				
13				
14				
15			No symptoms. Isolation ends	
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				Isolation ends if symptoms have stopped

NHS | HM Government
Keep up to date with the latest advice at nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19
For the latest information on the situation in the UK, visit gov.uk/coronavirus

Residents have been continuing to share stories of kindness to celebrate how people are helping each other through this crisis.

- “All of the teachers in Camden who have volunteered over the Easter holidays, ensuring children of key workers and vulnerable children have a safe place to go. Camden schools are an amazing team who work so well together to support our children! To ALL key workers, THANK YOU.” **Rhyl Primary School**
- “Thanks to [@monkchips](https://twitter.com/monkchips) who set up [@corona_positive](https://twitter.com/corona_positive) to brighten things up a bit.” **Jordi**
- “Diane Fisher, the energetic and devoted organiser of the King's Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association is wonderfully supporting her team of marvellous volunteers in all the help they are giving to the needy. Bless you all!” **Yvonne Craig**

Who would you like to say thank you to?
Email camdentalking@camden.gov.uk or tweet [@CamdenCouncil](https://twitter.com/CamdenCouncil) #WeMakeCamden



Financial support for those facing hardship

If you're struggling with your finances as a result of coronavirus, help is available.

1. If you're facing immediate financial hardship – which means you have no money in your account or income – you can apply for a one-off payment of around £50 through the Council's Local Welfare Assistance Fund (LWAF) to buy groceries or pay a bill.
2. Make sure you're claiming the benefits you're entitled to, including Council Tax Support.

To apply for the LWAF or find out about benefits, go to camden.gov.uk/financialsupport or call **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.

If you live in a private rented property

Private tenants worried about paying rent should speak with their landlord about the option of rent reduction or late payment. You can also apply for Universal Credit, and if you're already receiving that or Housing Benefit, you can apply to the Council for Discretionary Housing Payment, by calling **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.

All eviction proceedings have been put on hold by the Government until at least 25

June. No evictions should be taking place during this time. It's a criminal offence to illegally evict or harass tenants. If you're being harassed or threatened with eviction, contact the private sector housing team on **020 7974 2543**, Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm, or email hmolicensing@camden.gov.uk

For more information and advice, visit camden.gov.uk/financialsupport

Supporting Camden businesses and employees

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme offers a financial lifeline for local businesses in Camden, allowing employers to claim up to 80% of their furloughed staffs' salaries.

- Any employer in the UK is eligible for the scheme, provided it had a PAYE scheme in operation on 19 March 2020.
- The Government will pay up to £2,500p/m (plus national insurance and minimum employer pension contributions).

- Eligible staff are those who were in employment on 19 March 2020.
- Eligible staff must be furloughed for a minimum of 3 weeks.
- All claims should be submitted through HMRC.

For more information and to make a claim, visit gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme

camden.gov.uk/coronavirus
020 7974 4444 (option 9)

